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There's No Debate: Undecided No More

By: **Emil Guillermo**, Oct 16, 2008

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With the last debate on Wednesday, I decided to take my amok approach and become a maverick: I gave both candidates a bye.

At this stage, it seemed to be the high road and the best way to clear the decks of



the desperation and mud that's entered the campaign endgame.

So for clarity's sake and peace of mind, I already mailed in my vote. Why wait until Nov. 4?

Of course, here in California, if you still haven't even registered to vote, you have got until Oct. 20 to take that first step. If you watched the debate, maybe it helped you decide to vote. That's great.

But for those who remember Obama declaring his candidacy in Springfield, Ill., or his victories in Iowa and throughout the primary season, is one more run-through of political patty-cake really going to make a difference at this stage?

Haven't we heard the issues stated and restated before? We've seen the candidates together in three debates and separately for nearly a year. We've certainly heard the recycled mud. When McCain continues to hurl up William Ayres, the man who was a dangerous college radical when Barack Obama was in elementary school, you know we have gone beyond debate.

At this point, especially when candidates aren't all that forthcoming, or are promising everything under the sun (McCain's economic plan), they actually begin to lose credibility. Desperation will do that.

So, it's time to vote. We have all the information we need.

You shouldn't be taken in by the debate hype that has turned these sessions into phony can't-miss spectacles. We watch as if they're the Olympic gymnastics finals and wait for someone to fall off the balance beam or get impaled by the pommel horse. (Now, that's entertainment!)

It's bigger than *Monday Night Football*, where there's the chance for a candidate to run down the clock, then send in a diminutive governor to kick a game-winning field goal with time expiring. (That's the conservative fantasy that this game is really that close.)

Recently, the campaign has conjured up cage fighting or at the very least, *The Jerry Springer Show*, with McCain supporters exhorting violence inspired by xenophobia. (Where is Gaydolph Titler when we really need him?) And of course, the McCanines got the green light on their surliness from whom? Their candidate in the last debate.

Who is "That one?"

The 2008 National Asian American Survey released last week said 34 percent of Asian American likely voters are still undecided. That's four times the number of undecideds in the general electorate, according to other polls.

Seems a tad high. Thirty-four percent? Are you really that undecided? Or playing hard to get? Come on, we're Asian Americans. What are you waiting for, McCain or Obama to show up with a tax rebate at your door?

Besides, we're always the first to leave the test center. We don't wait for the end. We finish early, ace the exam. Now let's get out of here early and go to Peet's.

I didn't get that feeling until debate No.2, the semi-town hall in Nashville, when McCain responded to a

question by pointing to Obama and saying the now infamous line, “That one.”

The remark wasn’t racist, necessarily, but it showed an astonishing level of condescension and disrespect that should send a chill through every Asian American, let alone every person who has been in the minority in this country.

Asian Americans remember when we were “that one.”

When Chinese and Japanese were excluded from this country at the turn of the 20th century, we were “that one.”

When Filipinos were barred from intermarriage in California, we were “that one.”

When more recent immigrants have been treated in a condescending and discriminatory way, because of your accent, your lack of English skills or because of your looks, everyone in our community has been “that one.”

McCain’s veiled hate rhetoric reveals an insidious and nasty side that perhaps only comes out in impromptu moments. (Is that post-traumatic stress?) But is this the person you feel will speak for you and best represent your interests? Unlikely.

Of course, it doesn’t just boil down to a slip up like “That one.” Put the merits of all the presidential and vice presidential candidates on a grid, and the superiority of one ticket over the other is just staggering. If the best deserves to win, and if you believe in a true meritocracy, then there should be no question. Shall we go with the president of the *Harvard Law Review*? Or the guy who graduated near the bottom of his class at the Naval Academy? On the veep side, do we go with the overachieving Joe? Or Miss Joe Six-Pack and her distinguished junior college career?

If you were the H.R. gatekeeper, you’d know whose résumé would be a keeper.

So, if you were on the fence up to now, one of those undecided Asian Americans in this country who just aren’t sure yet, John McCain’s “that one” comment should be enough to allow for a little campaign epiphany.

That was one clump of mud hurled not just at another candidate, but at all of us.

Asian Americans - no - everyone in this country need a president who can console, uplift, inspire and reassure us all during these troubling times. McCain? He’s not “that one.”

Check the blog for daily updates at www.amok.asianweek.com, E-mail: emil@amok.com



Comments

1. A powerful post.

To be balanced, there [have been moments](#) that lend a touch of class to the McCain campaign, but only moments and only a touch.

–Burr Deming on Oct 18, 2008

2. As a African American women I see and am humble for Senator Obama represents so much to everyone. I want to lived in a country were we can learn, care and respect everyone. Asian, Black, Latino, Jewish, Middle East, Native, White....I want to see a rainbow of people in the White House because America is the only melting pot!!! TOGETHER WE STAND DIVIDED WE FALL, SI SE PEUDE, YES WE CAN

–Davania on Oct 19, 2008

3. powerful post indeed. i endorse Obama. i will give just this one reason. if he becomes president...that will blow the doors wide open in the world of politics, cement and mark a milestone in American history and social progress, and make a bold and irrefutable statement to the world that YES WE HAVE COME THIS FAR. a “black” man in office...think what that will mean for everyone...every...single...minority...every race...every color. a GIANT leap and triumph for people. period.

less than 200 years ago it was still legal and widely accepted for one human being to own another as property in this great nation....we have come so far...

–S&T on Oct 19, 2008

4. and by people i mean ALL PEOPLE

–S&T on Oct 19, 2008

5. Dear S&T:

You nailed it.

And unless the McCainites manage a new version of the Reichstag fire or the neocons actually invoke “martial law” with the was it? First Brogade of the Third Infantry before Nov. 4, all signs and portents point to an Obama victory.

Read yesterday’s Info Clearing House lead article by Hofstra U. professor of political science David Michael Green.

Wherein which almost too-lengthy post, said worthy proclaims the political epitaph for what he calls the “regressives” of the Right and Center.

In the process of which he introduces, at least to my recall, three more epithets for our lame-ass, oops, sorry, lame-duck president, to wit:

1: “little toad”

2: “moral dwarf”

3: “Chumpster-in=Chief”

And all ascribed to Dubya’s “childhood inadequacies.”

His thesis outlines the fulsome fruition of a little-boy bully’s potentials into the putatively adult man’s megalomania that defies credibility, which is to say, the wanton destruction and genocide ongoing in

Iraq.

The good news is that Prof. Green is absolutely certain that this tragicomedy is over, as in kaput. The bad news is that the domestic bankruptcy and devolution of the republic itself has overtaken the Mideast disaster.

All this even as Afghanistan takes over the Iraqi role and vice-presidential candidates audition for Comedy Central. Where she rightfully belongs, and no slight to David Letterman as on-screen moderator of the year.

Answer the question, idiot.

So, melanomas and rimless specs aside, why is the Obama campaign still "soliciting" five bucks from the likes of this impecunious specimen?

Who refuses to believe that the dollars trump the so-called issues.

Frank Eng

P.S.: And IF that predicted "landslide" "mandate" does take place come Nov. 4, the Obama crowd should seriously consider a nouveau New Deal, complete with oversight AND investiture of jobs inventions along the lines of infrastructure and the reining in of offshoring industries and lack of same. Gas pump prices are receding in the face of resistance/improvidence, but grocery prices continue to soar beyond appetite and subsistence.

P.P.S.: Dig, particularly, Green's assay of Juarice Kwnnwsy in upcoming terms of the er, ah "High" court.

Maybe Antonin can join Dick Cheney on his next turn in the duck blinds?

—Frank Eng on Oct 20, 2008

6. Oops. Sorry.

Make that "Justice Kennedy."

—Frank Eng on Oct 20, 2008

7. for a man many years my senior, i gotta say, frank, your mind is still razor sharp

—S&T on Oct 20, 2008

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